



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/765,134	01/28/2004	Donald J. Kerrish	61404-020	3590

7590 02/25/2008  
McDermott, Will & Emery  
600 13th Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20005-3096

EXAMINER
----------

CRANE, LAWRENCE E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

1623

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
-----------	---------------

02/25/2008

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No. 10/765,134	Applicant(s) KERRISH ET AL.	
	Examiner Lawrence E. Crane	Art Unit 1623	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on October 31, 2007 (RCE & amendment).
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 39-53 and 59-63 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 39-53 and 59-63 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 23 August 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some    \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

Claims 1-38 were previously cancelled, claims 54-58 have been cancelled, claims 39, 42-43, 47, 49 and 51-52 have been amended, new claims 59-63 have been added, and the disclosure has been amended as per the RCE and the amendment filed October 31, 2007. No supplemental or additional Information Disclosure Statements (IDSs) have been received as of the date of this Office action.

Claims 39-53 and 59-63 remain in the case.

Note to applicant: when a rejection or objection refers to a claim X at line y, the line number is determined from the claim as previously submitted by applicant in the most recent response including ~~lines deleted by line through~~.

Claims 39, 43, 47, 49, 51 and 59 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 39 the term “at least one excipient” renders the instant claim incomplete because the identity or the identities of the “excipient” has/have not been provided in the remainder of the claim, and because there is now no upper limit to the number of different excipients that may be present, i.e. a failure to provide adequately defined metes and bounds. See also claims 43 and 49. See also claim 47 wherein the term “a binder, a filler and a disintegrant” have the same problems. See claim 51 which also fails to specifically identify the particular “excipient” referred to generically therein and to claim 59 wherein the term “at least” introduces a problem with undefined upper limit (metes and bounds not adequately defined).

Applicant's arguments filed October 31, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Examiner notes applicant's amendments, amendments that have necessitated an amendment of the previous grounds of rejection.

The non-statutory double patenting rejection, whether of the obvious-type or non-obvious type, is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent. *In re Thompson*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969);

*In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); *In re Van Ornam*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); and *In re Goodman*, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 C.F.R. §§1.321(b) and (c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a non-statutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with the application. See 37 C.F.R. §1.78(d).

Effective January 1, 1994, an registered attorney or agent of record may sign a Terminal Disclaimer. A Terminal Disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 C.F.R. §3.73(b).

Claims **39-53 and 59-63** are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims **1-17** of U.S. Patent No. **6,720,000** (PTO-892 ref. I). Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because both sets of claims are directed to processes for making ribavirin-containing pharmaceutical compositions by a process involving wet granulation in the presence of a variety of pharmaceutical carriers and excipients, wherein the patented process is encompassed by the instant claimed process.

Applicant's arguments filed October 31, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant has noticed and traversed this rejection, but has not responded either with an argument overcoming same or with the requested Terminal Disclaimer. Therefore, this rejection has been maintained.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. §103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

"A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made."

Claims **39-53 and 59-63** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over **Tam '097** (PTO-1449 ref. **A9**) in view of **Liebowitz et al.** (PTO-1449 ref. **A10**) and further in view of PTO-892 refs. **S (Rudnic) and T (Porter)**.

The instant claims are directed to a wet granulation/spheronization-spheronizing process of making a ribavirin-containing pharmaceutical composition using convention carriers and excipients.

**Tam** at column 4, lines 35-54 discloses multiple different variations of pharmaceutical compositions containing ribavirin as the active ingredient. **Tam** does not disclose any specific process details for the preparation of any pharmaceutical composition.

**Liebowitz et al.** is directed to ribavirin-containing pharmaceutical compositions which are fast dissolving and which include conventional carriers and excipients, and a process for conversion of said composition into a fast-dissolving compacted capsule form. **Liebowitz et al.** does not disclose “spheronized” ribavirin-containing compositions or the subsequent coating thereof.

**Rudnic** (PTO-892 ref. **S**) beginning at column 1 of page 1646 discloses “Spheronization” which appears to be the same as applicant’s “spheronizing.” **Rudnic** does not disclose “spheronized” ribavirin-containing compositions.

**Porter**(PTO-892 refs. **T**) discloses the coating of pharmaceutical dosages forms and at page 1666 at column 1 lists 9 reasons for using this technology in the preparation of pharmaceutical compositions. **Porter** does not disclose “spheronized” ribavirin-containing compositions which have been further coated.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the disclosures cited because of the motivations provided by the **Tam** and **Liebowitz** references and because the variations claimed herein appear to be entirely conventional and to have not produced any unexpected results.

One having ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine these references because **Tam** motivates the preparation of various pharmaceutical compositions and the remaining references provide details of how this may be accomplished in the manner

claimed herein. In particular Liebowitz et al. provides a subsidiary motivation by disclosing the commonly used carriers and excipients. And lastly the chapters from Remington's Pharmaceutical Sciences provide details of how solid dosage forms may be prepared by various standard processes including spheronization, and how such pellets may be further process by addition of exterior coatings to effect rate of dissolution.

Therefore, the instant claimed process of producing ribavirin-containing pharmaceutical compositions using spheronized and optionally surface-coated pellets would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art having the above cited reference before him at the time the invention was made.

Applicant's arguments filed October 31, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that the prior art does not teach the details of the instant claimed processes, an argument that appears to presuppose that the rejection was an anticipation rejection, not an obviousness rejection. Clearly the rejection was an obviousness rejection, and the obviousness standard does not require that every particular process detail be present in the cited art in order for the rejection to be properly made. More importantly, as taught by the **Billman** and **Rosicky** cases, when a composition including a known-in-the-art active ingredient, or in this case a method of making a composition wherein the active ingredient is well known in the art, unexpected results are necessary to establish that applicant is not merely claiming the result of a routine optimization of the prior art. While applicant can, and has, pointed out detailed differences between the instant claimed processes and the cited art, applicant has failed to provide any basis for concluding that the instant processes are accompanied by any unexpected results. For this reason the instant grounds of rejection, amended to include new claims and exclude cancelled claims, has been maintained.

Claims **55-56** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over **Tam '097** (PTO-1449 ref. A9) in view of **Liebowitz et al. '128** (PTO-1449 ref. A10).

The instant claims are directed to compositions containing ribavirin.

**Tam** at column 4, lines 35-54 discloses multiple different variations of pharmaceutical compositions containing ribavirin as the active ingredient.

**Liebowitz et al.** is directed to ribavirin-containing pharmaceutical compositions which are fast dissolving and which include conventional carriers and excipients, and a process for conversion of said composition into a fast-dissolving compacted capsule form.

Applicant is also referred to *Ex Parte Billman*, 71 USPQ 253 (POBA 1946) wherein it is stated that “[whether]...the effective ingredient ... is carried by a solvent or a diluent does not change the effective character of the compound.” This view is further supported by the more recent decision in *In re Rosicky*, 125 USPQ 341 (CCPA 1960) wherein it is stated that “A known compound in association with a carrier is not a patentable composition.” In light of the guidance provided by the above noted prior board and court decisions and the disclosures of **Tam ‘097** and **Liebowitz et al. ‘128**, compositions containing ribavirin and one or more of the various notoriously well known in the art excipients or carriers would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in light of the teachings of both **Tam** and **Liebowitz**, which teachings are directed in part to making and isolating ribavirin-containing pharmaceutical compositions.

Therefore, the instant claimed ribavirin-containing compositions would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art having the above cited reference before him at the time the invention was made.

Applicant’s arguments filed October 31, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that the prior art does not teach the details of the instant claimed processes, an argument that appears to presuppose that the rejection was an anticipation rejection, not an obviousness rejection. Clearly the rejection was an obviousness rejection, and the obviousness standard does not require that every particular process detail be present in the cited art in order for the rejection to be properly made. More importantly, as taught by the **Billman** and **Rosicky** cases, when a composition including a known-in-the-art active ingredient, or in this case a method of making a composition wherein the active ingredient is well known in the art, unexpected results are necessary to establish that applicant is not merely claiming the result of a routine optimization of the prior art. While applicant can, and has, pointed out detailed differences between the instant claimed processes and the cited art, applicant has failed to provide any basis for concluding that the instant processes are

accompanied by any unexpected results. For this reason the instant grounds of rejection, amended to include new claims and exclude cancelled claims, has been maintained.

See also **Rudnic et al. '014** (PTO-1449 ref. A24, column 11 at lines 25-35); **Johannesson et al. '669** (PTO-1449 ref. A30, see claims 13-16); **Smith et al. '265** (PTO-1449 ref. A26, see pp 6, line 22 to page 7, line 17 and, formulation and use in process of making claims 1-32); **Witkowski et al. '216** (PTO-1449 ref. A3, see ointments, creams and topical solutions at columns 5-7); **Witkowski et al. '545** (PTO-892 ref. C, see ointments, creams and topical solutions at columns 5-7); **Witkowski et al. '771** (PTO-1449 ref. A7, see ointments, creams and topical solutions at columns 4-8); **Liebowitz et al. '594** (PTO-1449 A11, see columns 2 and 6-8); **Liebowitz et al. '252** (PTO-1449 A12, see columns 2 and 6-8); **Liebowitz et al. '032** (PTO-1449 A19, see columns 2 and 6-10); and **Liebowitz et al. '090** (PTO-1449 A20, see the Bowen declaration).

Applicant's arguments filed October 31, 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant is referred to the response following the immediately preceding rejection.

Papers related to this application may be submitted to Group 1600 via facsimile transmission (FAX). The transmission of such papers must conform with the notice published in the Official Gazette (1096 OG 30, November 15, 1989). The telephone number to FAX (unofficially) directly to Examiner's computer is 571-273-0651. The telephone number for sending an Official FAX to the PTO is 571-273-8300.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Examiner L. E. Crane whose telephone number is **571-272-0651**. The examiner can normally be reached between 9:30 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ms. S. Anna Jiang, can be reached at **571-272-0627**.

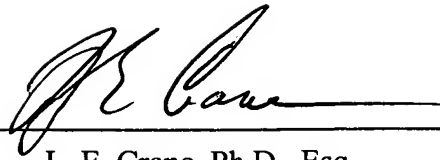
Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group 1600 receptionist whose telephone number is **571-272-1600**.



Application/Control Number: 10/765,134  
Art Unit: 1623

Page 8

LECrane:lec  
02/19/2008

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. E. Crane", is written over a horizontal line.

L. E. Crane, Ph.D., Esq.

Patent Examiner

Technology Center 1600